The

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Notes of the Month.

In common with our friends in England, we mourn the loss of Mr. John Harrison. He was widely known not only in England among Unitarians, but through business and other relationships in many places on the Continent. In 1909, as President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, he paid a visit to our Church in Ireland, when he commanded the respect and love of all who met him, ministers and laity alike. He was very closely related to his Church. "A son of the Manse," says the writer of a beautiful and fitting tribute in *The Christian Life*, "John Thomas Harrison was born at Chowbent, Lancashire, on July 9th, 1841. He was the second son of the late Dr. John Harrison, who for many years was minister at Chowbent Chapel, and subsequently of the Effra-road Congregation, Brixton, London. His grandfather was a Manchester merchant, while his great-uncle, Rev. William Harrison, was for fifty years minister at Blackley Unitarian Chapel, near Manchester. His great-grandfather was Rev. Ralph Harrison, for thirty-nine years co-pastor with Rev. Dr. Barnes, of Cross-street Chapel, Manchester. Ralph Harrison was the compiler of "Sacred Harmony," long a standard work in the North of England, and some of his tunes are to be found in many collections in current use. Mr. John Harrison was also descended from Rev. Cuthbert Harrison, of Singleton, who, with his brother Joseph, were among the ejected ministers of 1662. On his maternal side, his descent was from Rev. Samuel Angier, of Dukinfield, and Rev. John Cooper, of Gee Cross, Hyde." In No. 29 of the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* (November, 1909) will be found a portrait of Mr. Harrison, with brief sketch of his various activities.

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Replying to a question as to whether the Unitarian Churches experience a decline of membership such as is so frequently complained of in other denominations, Dr. Carpenter said: "It is a little difficult to test that. It touches on the questions of how far the religious bodies have kept pace with the progress of population. In Leeds, for example, which I happen to know very well, the population has increased enormously within thirty or more years, but there are no more churches, and, while I cannot say that the attendance at any of the three congregations has shown any sort of decline, they

certainly have not increased in proportion to the population. Altogether, while some churches have declined, others have grown. I do not think we show a decline positively, but it may be arguable that we do relatively." He added: "In many of our congregations I have noted with regret that the young people have gone off, while the elders remain, exactly as in other denominations. Their places are taken by others from other churches who are in search of a more liberal theology, so that upon the whole the congregations do not show a decline, although in particular families again and again the decline is marked."

* *

All hearts have been touched by the appalling coalpit disaster in Yorkshire, attended as it has been by a lamentable loss of life. The scenes in the locality as described by the newspapers are pitiful in the extreme. "Every window in Conisborough and the neighbouring village of Denaby has its blind drawn," says the *Daily Chronicle* correspondent. "Tenants of every little red-brick cottage are grieving for the loss of relatives or friends who died in the Cadeby pit. Set red and black among the slopes of green trees, the villages are a self-contained community, where each resident is known personally to the other. That is why, in a disaster of this kind, the blow, and the pain it leaves, fall, whether lightly or heavily, on every house in the valley."

SERMON

Preached by Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A., Moderator, in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the General Synod in June last.

("*Those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary.*" *I. Cor. xii.* 22.)

IN speaking of the Christian Church Paul makes much of two figures which imply organization. He speaks of it as a building, as a temple. The various parts of a large edifice contribute to the beauty and the usefulness of the whole. With the apostle each individual Christian, each living soul, is a temple, which he is to build up; and, besides, the Christians must edify, that is, build up one another.

Yet again, the *society* of Christians is also a temple. In another apostolic writing the individual members are spoken of as "living stones built up into a spiritual temple," in which each has its place—its necessary place in the edifice.

Still more striking is the other figure favoured by the apostle,—that of a *body*, a living organism, of which the human body is the type. Of this mystic body Christ is the head, "from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body."

There is fitting subordination in this body. In it Christ is the head of every man, as man is the head of the wife; and, to complete the ordination, as God is the head of Christ. And again, he says Christ is the head over all things to the Church, which is his body.

You know, my friends, that we have sought, with considerable success, to reorganize our Non-Subscribing elements: to organize more completely and serviceably than ever before.

There come times in the history of religious movements that call for attention to this matter, the neglect of which might prove hurtful. The Protestant Reformation was such a time; and we can see on looking back that the new spiritual forces then set free for action lost much effective power through lack of what the ancient Church possessed in a highly developed form,—organization.

Luther, however, was never fully awakened to the necessity of organization, because the States with which he had direct dealings, together with their princes, adopted his views, and were prepared to defend them. And so it was elsewhere that methods of government were formulated. In some cases the Episcopal methods were retained; in others a Presbyterian or Congregational form was invented.

We have been induced to organize.

We believed that there could be a combination of our resources for the general good : that there could be a united body which would bring the detached parts into organic union : that organization was advisable not as a means of aggression, but as a defence, and yet more for peaceful development, and the formation of a spiritual home for ourselves, which might attract the spiritually homeless.

This we have done, because there is strong need for our continued existence with increased vitality.

We are all aware that there is at this time a tendency, not to say a movement, towards union among Christian sects. We see it in the Methodist and in the Presbyterian bodies. The tendency, indeed, is toward the union of denominations hitherto regarded as irreconcilable. Recently the "House of Clerical and Lay Delegates of the Episcopal Church" in America proposed to extend an invitation to "all Christian communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" to unite with the Episcopal Church. We can appreciate this tendency to union, and also the brevity of the proposed creed, though we see that it excludes, and was evidently meant to exclude, ourselves.

The time will doubtless come when credal barriers between Churches will be thrown down ; but that time is not yet.

We have of course set up no credal barrier. We are Non-Subscribers ; our new Church is organized in order that it may continue to exist in fuller vigour. Only through our collective energies shall we be strong enough to meet the demands and the opportunities of the present and coming times, to afford the strength of a rational Christian faith and the comfort of free Christian fellowship.

It is obvious to every observer that religion is in these days passing through the testing fires of a great crisis. Growth of thought and the fever of unsatisfied ideals and desires are causing men to turn from old methods and dogmas as insufficient, as unsatisfying. In place of the superstitious and the questionable, the outgrown and the outworn, it is ours to present nobler thoughts and ideals,—to offer a living religion that can satisfy and win both head and heart and call forth the best energies of our human nature.

The purpose of a Church is to build up Christlike character ; to make Christlike men and women, and to approximate human society to the Kingdom of Heaven. Each individual member is a part of the body of which Christ is the head. The connection with him must be a living connection. Each is to be intimately conversant with him, to feel him as of our near kindred, and ourselves as in living union with him. Each has his part to play in its working and high aims. The life-giving spirit must flow in each, and each must be a channel for its flow, and not an obstruction.

Christ introduced a new spirit into life which Christians share. As Christians and as members of the Christian Church there must be in us that spirit of Christ, the virtue, the goodness which we recognise as Christlike. To possess this, we must draw near to the heart of Christ, breathe in the loveliness and the beauty of his spirit, and be *inspired* by his life of self-forgetting love.

And the Church is the one institution that encourages and helps us to do this. It is the living Sanctuary. Reflecting on the utterances of Christ we learn to commune with him and with his Father. Admiring his resignation and submission we too are led to say : Father, Thy will be done. Meditating on his life of loving service, we come to feel the blessedness of service and to know that the only true life is in following him who went about doing good. In this way, making his life ours, we can say with Paul : "To me to live is Christ," for his life is coursing in us. And because we are parts, members, of the body of Christ, with every accession of spiritual life in us, we are contributing to the strength and beauty and life of the whole.

Now, let me proceed to say that this is true not only of individual members, but also of single congregations. Their

true Christian life is also promoted by connection with the greater body, of which Christ is the head. If they exemplify Christlike goodness, if through it they pay the tribute not of money merely, but of earnest and faithful work, they will receive much more than they give. Spiritual life grows by work in some good and philanthropic and holy cause. And the corporate life of the congregation is the aggregate of the spiritual vitality of its individual members, each one of whom is enriched by the possession of some "gift," or the putting forth of some effort, or by some real sacrifice. Each receives for every such contribution what is far more precious, viz., a fuller inflow of the spirit of the Divine Master into his soul. A Church made up of such living elements would be an example to all who behold it—a city set on a hill, a beacon shedding far and near rays that attract, guide, and gladden.

Paul's figure is widely known and familiar as representing social relations. Long has the expression, the "body politic," been used. About five centuries before the Christian era there was social trouble and discontent in the young Roman republic. A large number of the soldier citizens withdrew to Mons Sacer, outside Rome, not intending to go back. This would have been disastrous to the new State in the midst of its active enemies. In the emergency the Senate sent Menenius Agrippa to plead with the malcontents. He simply told this fable :

"Once upon a time before the various members of the body worked together in harmony, and when each limb and part had its own aim and its own speech, the other parts grew indignant, because whatever was procured by their care, labour, and industry was assigned to the stomach, which organ, lying at ease in the midst of the body did nothing but appropriate and enjoy the products of their toil. They therefore conspired among themselves and agreed that the hands should not convey food to the mouth, that the mouth should not receive it when presented, nor the teeth chew it. In this way they thought to subdue the stomach by famine. The result was that not only the stomach, but all the members, and the whole body were at length reduced to the last stage of emaciation. Hence it became clear that the stomach was of service to all and each ; that it contributed not less to their nourishment than they did to its wants ; that it formed and distributed to all parts of the body that blood on which depended their life and activity."

Not less striking are the Apostle's word—I. Cor. xii. 12-21—teaching that the relation between the members should be, not one of suspicion, but of mutual trust and co-operation. Then the Apostle, having shown the mutual need between the members, continues his argument in the words of our text : "Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary."

In our human imperfection we distinguish between the small and the great, between the more and the less worthy, not judging a member according to its fulfilment of function, but according to its conspicuousness in our view, according as it bulks large in our eyes, and so our distinctions are arbitrary and misleading.

The absence of a tiny rivet from a machine may render it unworkable. Accessories insignificant to a mere onlooker are requisite for its action. So it is in the human body ; so in human society. The feeblest members are necessary. Without their aggregate co-operation the rest are powerless. What is the worth of a general without the units which compose an army ? It is the faithful discharge of humble functions that secures the success of interests of prime importance.

This is true in our great industries. It is true in the government of nations. It is so in the Church of the living God.

The countless and vast fields of human enterprise, in which we may include the Church, would remain barren but for the patient toil of those workers whom men speak of as "humble" and "weak," whose very names are often forgotten. But are they unrecognised by the head of the Church ? Are they

unknown to Him who is the Head of Christ ?

Thinkers often show us that the wide distribution of supplies for man's physical sustenance must be providential. Not less providential is the distribution of "gifts," faculties, powers, talents, choices among men, fitting them and actually placing them to fulfil the necessary duties of our complicated society. Some of these duties we, without giving real thought to the matter, designate as lowly, feeble, weak, as if they were of little account. The Apostle would correct this carelessness. Sometime we shall learn that it is not the position we occupy in the body, but the way we discharge the duty of that position that merits praise.

Distinctive honour will be accorded to the faithfulness of the discharge of its own proper function.

"Honour and shame from no condition rise :
Act well your part ; there all the honour lies "

In the Church there are diversities of "gifts," but the one pervading Spirit. And members are endowed with gifts through the Spirit enabling them to do their several parts. In the collective Church the same is true of the separate congregations composing it. Here also it is true that "those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary." As individuals and as congregations it is our *privilege* to be necessary : it is our honour to do our part well. All have the rank of indispensableness : each can attain the honour of rendering faithful service.

Let us now glance for a moment at the circumstances of our collective Church. It is evident that some congregations within our bounds are full of fine activity, and are bringing strength and honour to the whole. It is evident also that there are congregations that are weak—weak numerically and financially. They have declined in these respects through circumstances over which they had no control. There have been movements of population to the large towns in these homelands, or to colonies beyond the ocean. This draining of our country districts has gone on now for two or three generations.

In this way the best members of the congregations, the most enterprising, the manly, the ambitious, have been drawn away. In these now enfeebled Churches men and women have been trained into characters of ability and have been consecrated to goodness, and they have gone away, in many cases, to strengthen and build up other causes, to prove powers of usefulness in other places. Am I not right in saying that some of the members of the fine congregation which habitually worships in this house, originally came from one or other of the Churches, now feeble, that I speak of. It is well for you to remember that of their weakness they have contributed to your strength.

Our new Church cannot see the feeble members dwindle and die without an effort to help. And so we are taking measures that may enable them to tide over this time of depression so that they will be ready for the outburst of liberal religion that is most surely coming.

The Sustenation Fund which we have set ourselves to raise is our means of doing this important duty. By it we can afford assistance without the offensiveness of patronage or charity, and the help can be received without the sense of degradation. It will not need the plea of poverty, which is revolting to the self-respect of both minister and people.

So far we have met with encouraging success. And not only is our Fund succeeding, but we have signs, in those congregations that have thrown themselves most heartily into the project, of a revival of Church-life which will, I think, prove of more value to them than any material success.

Let us resolve, my brethren, to give ourselves with renewed spirit to our unfinished task. Let us work with fresh zeal for the Church which we love.

So shall her holy bounds increase,
With walls of praise and gates of peace ;
So shall the vine which martyr tears
And blood sustained, in other years,
With fresher life be clothed upon ;
And to the world in beauty show,
Glorious as Lebanon.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

"I can't say I'm sorry," said the Vicar, a Broad Churchman, "that I have been away from my Church to-day."

"What's to-day?" asked the Baptist.

"Trinity Sunday," replied the Vicar with a smile. "I forgot you were a Nonconformist, and therefore not in the habit of keeping festivals."

There were four of them in deck chairs on the hotel verandah, which overlooked the sea. The Vicar, as they called him, the Baptist, and two laymen, of whom one was of High Church tendencies, and the other occupied a somewhat critical and undefined position. They had been drawn together by a common interest in golf and cigars, and on that particular Sunday they found the verandah the jolliest place for the last hour before turning in.

"What have you done with your flock?" asked the Baptist.

"I have a mediæval curate," replied the Vicar; "he is a splendid fellow, and knows none of the difficulties which beset certain doctrines. He will have delighted this day in the analogies dear to St. Augustine and Lord Halifax; he has preached twice. Thank heaven for the comprehensiveness of the Anglican Church! Yes, I am rather glad I was out of it."

"I once heard a preacher," said the Undefined, "who asked his congregation how they could account for the fact that there was a Trinity Sunday if there were no Trinity? The argument did not convince me, and the appeal was lost. It doesn't really matter much what I believe, but when an exponent of the Church and its doctrines tells us he is glad not to be called upon for an explanation or enforcement of them, well, I confess it seems——"

"I call it a shocking confession," interrupted the High Churchman, "and I'm all for that mediæval curate. If you will tell me his name, I'll see if I can't do something for him. But as for you, if only I were your bishop——"

The Vicar smoked calmly. "Oh, that's your idea, is it?" he said. "I daresay I could give as good an account of myself as you could. What about the Articles?"

"Hush!" whispered the Baptist. "Don't forget that there are those present who are not members of your family. But, seriously, I should like to know why Trinity Sunday has its difficulties. I didn't know it was the day devoted to that doctrine, but I think if I were an Anglican I should welcome it."

"The plain fact is this," began the Vicar, "the doctrine has associations which mean nothing to me. Much of the language is taken from a race with a gift for metaphysics, and I have none. The analogies generally used are only ingenious, and convince very few. Besides, it takes a longer jump than I can take to cross from Galilee to Nicæa. If I could, I doubt the value of such an effort."

"So it amounts to this," asked the Undefined, "that if you were never to think or speak of the Trinity in unity you would be conscious of no loss."

"That is precisely my position," came the answer at once. "I should greet the change with a sense of relief, and keep to-day, as some Christians do, as the First Sunday after Pentecost."

"For my part," said the Undefined, "I am interested to hear such a confession. I can remember in the days when I went to Church that my head swam as I tried to think what it meant. Then one day the thought came to me that the belief, as I understood it, made no difference. So I ceased to trouble. Since that day I have felt sometimes that there might be something in it after all. But you clergy have to use the word fairly often. How do you manage it?"

The High Churchman looked sadly and seriously at the others. "Do you remember," he said, "that the doctrine of which you are speaking belongs to the unbroken tradition of the Christian Church, and you are not at liberty to deny it or reduce its meaning?"

"But do *you* fiud it a help in your inner life?" asked the Baptist.

"Most certainly," came the answer in a solemn tone. "I have been conscious to-day of a real and holy fellowship with the Triune God; the thought of the Holy Trinity has led me to adore in wonder the Godhead in all His eternal life manifested to us in time through the Son."

"But what of the metaphysics?" asked the Vicar.

"It is not metaphysics to me," said the High Churchman; "I was brought up on Newman. You may not remember what he says: 'To-day we celebrate, not an act of God's mercy towards us, but, forgetting ourselves, and looking only upon Him, we reverently and awfully, yet joyfully, extol the wonders, not of His works, but of His own nature.' It is mysterious, I know; but how could we expect anything else?"

"I know that it must be so," replied the Vicar, gently. "My curate speaks exactly as you do. He looks forward to this day with deep and sincere joy. But, for my part, I was brought up upon historical theology, and I see the works. I think I see how the statements of faith came into being. I become in sympathy with almost every kind of heretic in turn. Harnack and others of his school have made it impossible for me to look at the doctrine as Newman did. I suppose when I speak of it at all I am some kind of heretic, probably a Sabellian. But how do you deal in your Baptist Churches with such things?"

"We don't deal much in the Creeds," said the Baptist. "I haven't read the Athanasian Creed since I had to do it for my degree. I rather enjoyed it then. But in your Churches we keep pretty steadily within the four corners of the New Testament."

"There you can find the doctrine, surely?" said the High Churchman.

"I was going on to say," answered the Baptist, "all that really matters is there. The desire to secure for our Lord an eternal personal life, so that He shall not be a momentary phase; the experience of His continued personal presence through His spirit, the demand of faith to read in the eternal values those things which were happening in time—all this we find."

"Do you preach all that?" asked the Undefined, "because if you do I should like to hear it."

"The plain fact is this," said the Baptist, warming to the occasion, "that we might do well to lay aside for a time all the statements of faith which have lost their present reality, and get back to the experiences which are behind the New Testament. Then let us see where the same experiences of new life in Christ lead *us*."

"Where do you think they will lead?" asked the High Churchman.

"Not perhaps to the Creeds," answered the Baptist, "but certainly to the Thing which the Creeds meant to those who framed them."

"As long as you keep that," said the High Churchman, "perhaps you will not go far wrong."

"It's a pity," added the Vicar as he rose, "that it is twelve months before the next Trinity Sunday. I should like to have a word on the subject."

"Come and tell my people," said the Baptist. "They won't know it isn't Trinity Sunday."

"I would," said the Vicar, "if it weren't for the Bishop. But before long——"

The sentence was unfinished, but they all knew what it meant.

S. *in Christian World.*

THE RISE OF UNITARIANISM IN WALES.

By Cambriensis.

V.

FROM this old Chapel sprung three Churches of the Unitarian order, at Aberdare, Cefn, and Blaenwrach, or I should say Churches destined to become Unitarian, for they were not Unitarian when they were first founded. Long before they seceded from Cwm-y-glo, our Church at Llwynrhydowen was built and was making excellent progress in spite of orthodox opposition.

In 1811 the Rev. Thomas Evans (1764–1833) became minister of the Old Meeting-House, Aberdare, and it was he that made the advance, which proved to be the final step to pure Unitarianism.

Priestley had a very strong exponent in the Rev. T. Evans. From his youth he had studied ardently the works of that learned doctor, and his diligence in that pursuit gained him the name of "Wee Priestley." However, exponents of such principles, even at the beginning of the 19th century, had to pay a heavy price for their "boldness." This minister was one that suffered severely. Notwithstanding the trials he encountered, he succeeded in strengthening his Church, which was now Unitarian, of the new type, and making it a cause, not only prosperous, but as a power to be felt in the life of the town wherein it is situated.

About 1799 Dr. Charles Lloyd (1766–1829) returned from England to Wales, and for three years he devoted himself to the work of spreading the principles of Unitarianism in Cardiganshire. Through him, it might be said that the Churches of Capelgroes and Pantydefaid were founded in 1802—the first two Churches erected in Wales to the worship of ONE GOD. Thus for some years there were two types of Unitarianism, the old and the new. The old type was upheld by the followers of Dr. Richard Price, and the new by the followers of Dr. Priestley, but ultimately these two types became fused together into one form.

Thus we have the two first groups of Unitarian Churches, one group in Cardiganshire, the other in Glamorganshire. As years went by new Churches came into existence, extending the boundaries of Unitarianism in the two counties. But there is another point as regards the origin of some of our Churches. At the beginning of the last century great dissatisfaction was caused among the Baptist Churches by the writings of Dr. William Richards, of Lynn. How far this dissatisfaction spread I cannot say, but an important and interesting statement was made in 1810 by the Rev. Benjamin Phillips, of St. Clears, Carm, to the effect that at that time (1810) there were ten ministers who were Unitarian-Baptists, in charge of small Churches, which had been newly established. Some of these small Churches became subsequently purely Unitarian, and being situated in congenial districts made good progress, whilst others of them being small and weak at first eventually died out.

There are at present in the Principality 34 Churches, 15 in each of the Counties of Glamorgan and Cardigan, 1 in Breconshire, 2 in Carmarthenshire, and 1 in Monmouthshire. Speaking generally of the condition of our Welsh Churches, I do not think they are at all likely to decline and fall for some time yet. And may our Churches in Wales, as well as in Ireland, Scotland, and England keep together, united, enthusiastic, and loyal to their principles, for there still lies a vast work ahead for them to do. May their influence bring other denominations closer into line in religious thought and sympathy, and bring men to observe as essential, not the ancient doctrines, but the plain ever-new truths which Jesus loved and preached, and to understand religion to be life.

(FINIS.)

ORDINATION AT BALLYCLARE OF REV. PERCIVAL GODDING.

ON Wednesday, 10th July, Rev. Percival Godding, till recently student in the Home Missionary College, Manchester, was ordained by the Antrim Presbytery to the pastorate of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Ballyclare. Service commenced at 11 o'clock, when a large congregation assembled, including, besides the ministers of the Antrim Presbytery, almost all the ministers of the Templepatrick Presbytery and the Methodist and Congregationalist ministers of Ballyclare. After devotional exercises, the Rev. J. D. Davies preached from St. Matthew 9, 12. The Choir rendered in an expressive manner the anthems, "I will Arise" and "O Lord, my God," and sang well the two

hymns, "Lord of all being, throned afar" and "Father, hear the prayer we offer," Mrs. Logan presiding at the harmonium. The Rev. M. S. Dunbar then addressed the congregation on the subject of Presbyterian Order of Church Government, at the close of which he put the usual questions to Mr. Godding, who replied in the affirmative. Mr. Godding then addressed the congregation, and signified his approval of Presbyterian Government and discipline as it is recognised in the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and promised to conform to its rules and regulations. A member of the congregation signified the congregation's adherence to the call. The members of the Presbytery then assembled, with other clergymen present, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands was gone through, Rev. James Kennedy, of Larne, offering up the ordination prayer, after which Mr. Godding was cordially greeted by all present. The Rev. Dr. Mellone delivered the charge to minister and congregation. The Benediction brought a most impressive service to a close.

THE PRESBYTERIAN ORDER.

By Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A.

That an address on the Presbyterian system of Church Government should be included in the ordination service in which we take part to-day shows that there was a time when the true method of government divided Christian people, so that our forefathers felt it was necessary to defend the form which they had adopted.

But since the 16th and 17th centuries, when this question was regarded as vital and a sufficient ground for separation, a great change has come over the mind of the Christian community. In our country, and in many others as well, force in matters of religion has long been abandoned, and the people have been left to choose the form of Church government they preferred. And the consequence has been that the minds of men have broadened amongst all parties.

The descendants of those whom it had been attempted to coerce into the acceptance of alien forms, in looking back on the great struggle of their fathers, have come to see that it was liberty they were fighting for rather than the divine right of a particular ecclesiastical polity; and now Presbyterians and Independents, and even not a few Episcopalians, having learned to look with more sympathy and tolerance on each other's views, are, none of them, quite so certain that they alone have scriptural authority, and that all the advantages are on their side.

This broader and more tolerant spirit is seen especially among the Non-Subscribing Presbyterians. We inherited our system of Church government from our Presbyterian ancestry, and have clung to it because we found it suitable. But the question never had the importance with us that it had with the older orthodox Presbyterians. The ground on which we broke away from the Church of our forefathers was doctrinal. The question of doctrine completely dwarfed that of government. We re-asserted the Protestant principle of the right of private judgment, and as a consequence claimed freedom from the dominion of ecclesiastically imposed creeds. First and foremost, we were non-subscribers, only after that were we Presbyterians. And the form of Church government hardly ever was a question of divine right with us, or if it ever was, soon ceased to be, and became merely a matter of convenience. So that we now freely hold communion and interchange pulpits with Churches having a different form of government.

Putting aside then the idea that the proper method of Church government has been revealed to us in the Scriptures, what have we to say in recommendation of Presbyterianism? What is its aim, its fundamental principle? While the older system, the Episcopalian, common to the Roman Catholics and Protestant Episcopalians, aims at keeping the power, wholly or for the most part, in the hands of the clergy, the Presbyterian system aims at giving an equal share of power to the laity. Its distinguishing mark is the government of the Church by all the members

of the Church. The equality of all Christians, or the universal priesthood is the principle which Luther found in the New Testament, and which he proclaimed as the charter of their liberty. It is the fundamental principle of Protestantism, in which either there are no priests or we are all priests. It implies that we have all the same spiritual privileges, that access to God is free to all, that religion is a matter between one's own soul and God, that no human being has a right to claim that his act or word is essential to the soul's salvation. That being so, the seat of authority cannot be in a particular class, but in the Church as a whole. Believing this, we must approve of placing the rule of the Church in the hands of its members. This is the aim of Presbyterianism. Its object in all its various courts of Kirk Session Presbytery, Synod, and Assembly is that the affairs of the Church should not be under the control of the clergy, but in the hands of all the members. It is the democratic principle as opposed to the autocratic.

Presbyterianism as carried out by us of course differs in some respects from the Presbyterianism of orthodox Churches. There is less need for government when the Churches are few in number, and especially when the power of controlling the beliefs of ministers and people is removed. The government of the Church is then confined to purely business matters. The individual Churches are left to manage their own affairs, and are not interfered with until they of their own accord seek the help and advice of their brethren.

Some might be disposed to say that we are much the same as the Congregationalists after all. And no doubt the difference is not much to speak of. Where Presbyterians have regard to liberty of conscience and impose no creed, and where Congregationalists feel the need of sympathy and co-operation and unite in such work as can be undertaken together, they approach very closely. But our tradition is that of Presbyterianism, and having deprived it of the evil power it once had of fettering the mind, we are glad to take advantage of its brotherhood and helpfulness in times of difficulty. Its laws and forms, as seen in the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland, we find suitable to our needs, while not interfering with our liberty, and if we ever come to think otherwise we are free to change them and choose the best. If our mode of government helps to preserve unity and peace among our people, and if it tends to awaken them to their responsibility and gives free scope to their energies, and thus helps to hasten the coming of God's Kingdom, it will have effectually accomplished the purpose which all forms of government are intended to serve.

Charge to Minister and People.

By Rev. Dr. Mellone.

Dr. Mellone said it was his privilege briefly to address that Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Congregation of Ballyclare. To the congregation he was a stranger; they were not under his control; but of their newly-ordained minister he had been an intimate friend for some time past, and if he was not personally acquainted with members of the Ballyclare Congregation, he was not a stranger to the larger body to which they belonged, and knew well the needs and difficulties and opportunities in Ireland for the kind of work in which they and their minister were to be engaged.

He would add a few words to the suggestions made by their friend the Rev. M. S. Dunbar on Presbyterian Church Order. It nearly always happened that there were persons in our Churches who were under the strange impression that the duties of membership consisted in sauntering into the church at the hour of service and listening—or *not* listening; and in matters of worship considered that the right principle was expressed in the saying, "I am at liberty to do just as I please." He was glad to think that it was not to such persons as those that he was speaking then. He was confident that that congregation would enter into the relation of people and

minister with a sense for the better and deeper meaning of Christian worship which it had in the great Reformation days. Of course it would be possible for them to regard their minister as literally and positively their paid servant, whose business it was to please them or else to take his departure ; but that would not be Presbyterianism. Again, it was possible for any minister to regard himself as a priest, and to hold that it was for him to lay down all directions for the laity, it being in their place to have little to say ; but that would not be Presbyterianism, but priestliness. Among Presbyterians, minister and people were to work together without ascribing authority exclusively to either side, the minister being no more than a preaching elder set aside solemnly and as being qualified by special training to direct and assist the thought and activities of the congregation. That was the spirit to be responded to by them as a congregation. They were to regard themselves as his fellow-labourers, all to co-operate together, they with him and he with them. They must remember the one great thing that mattered, to which any individual fancy must give way, that they should place before every other, the fact that the congregation existed in order that the great Christ-spirit should be made more real in all their hearts. If they did this they would entertain no doubt that all their minister's and all their own activities and endeavours would be worth while. He wished them to profoundly realize the true and vital aspect of their minister's work, and that they had no right to monopolize the whole of his time and labour. There were many who spoke with scorn of study and book-learning : perhaps he might say that study and book-learning were things that could be estimated duly only by those who knew them ; but what he would say was, that although there might be truth in the assertion that no study of other men's words in books could be a sufficient substitute for that other training for life of a true man among men in the actualities of men's lives, their endeavours, failures, achievements, defeats, triumphs, and victories ; and that the minister's vital message must be made up of all that kind of experience, it was nevertheless important to remember that he must *think* about it and have *opportunity* for thought. Some might have a longer experience than he, but they had not thought about the meaning of it all. They would not be able to tell the meaning of it easily. They would want someone to think about the common life and interpret it for them in the light of those eternal hopes and convictions which shall shine out of darkness, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Though Mr. Godding would not even be tempted to neglect intercourse with them in their ordinary life, it would be all the more incumbent upon them to give him time to frame the meaning of his thought. Respecting sermons the most scornful things had been said, but that was due to carelessness in the work of preparation. No work was more severely criticised when badly done, or more highly appreciated when well done. Let it be done by a man with diligent application of all his faculties and in the light of eternal hope, and its worth would be certain of acknowledgment.

In conclusion, Dr. Mellone said that Mr. Godding would have hours of trouble and depression, but he need have no dangerous moods of despondency, as there was a sufficient remedy ; one so simple indeed that some miss it altogether. There was no trouble so deep or so lasting or so dreadful that its worst sting would not disappear utterly and absolutely if one allowed oneself to enter into the lives of others. The help that he rendered to other lives in any way that they needed would come back to him as strength to deal with his own as not before : that was not a pulpit platitude ; it was the proof by every man of the secret of Christ. It was the power of the Christ-spirit touching and relieving one's trouble and one's pain. Dr. Mellone brought his most impressive address to a close with the expression of hearty

good wishes to congregation and minister alike.

After service, the members of Presbytery, with other ministers and members of the congregation, were entertained to luncheon, Mr. Forsythe occupying the chair. The toast of the King was loyally honoured, and Rev. T. Munn replied to that of The Lord Lieutenant and Prosperity to Ireland. Mr. M'Lean proposed the New Minister, to which Rev. P. Godding suitably responded. The Presbytery of Antrim was proposed by Rev. A. Turner, and acknowledged by Rev. G. L. Phelps. Rev. S. E. Bowen proposed The Visitors from other Denominations, which brought good speeches from Rev. Mr. Clayton (Methodist) and Rev. Mr. Lynch (Congregationalist). Rev. A. O. Ashworth proposed Visitors from Across the Water, to which Rev. Mr. Jones, Rev. Mr. Davies, and the Rev. Dr. Mellone replied. The Chairman, in a concluding speech, expressed his thanks to all who had been with them in Ballyclare that day.

Reports.

Ballee.—On Sunday, 23rd June, successful services were conducted by Rev. H. M'Lachlan, M.A., B.D., of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, and sermons appropriate to the re-opening of the renovated church were preached to large and appreciative congregations. The building has been thoroughly overhauled, new high-pressure heating apparatus set up, and a fine organ, built in solid oak by Dalladay of Hastings, has been erected. The old graveyard has been mapped and numbered and gravelled paths laid out. The tinted glass windows set in Castlewellan granite jambs are especially noticeable for their reposeful simplicity and strength. The grand old timbered roof, which was raised at the first renovation of the church in 1773, is unique, and showed out beautifully in the favourable light of the summer day. The old rough hewn flagged floor has been replaced by a patterned maple wood block floor, which still adds to the quiet neatness aimed at by the promoters of the scheme. The musical part of the service was rendered in a devotional spirit by the Choir, augmented by voluntary helpers. The beautiful instrument was ably handled by Mr. R. M'Cullen, C.E., who is honorary organist of the church. There was a generous response to the appeal for funds, nearly a hundred pounds being realised by the services. An outstanding feature of the day was the fact that two neighbouring rectors of the Episcopal Church held no services, thus leaving their people free to attend these re-opening services at our Ballee Unitarian Church—a gracious compliment to minister and people that is very grateful. This display of liberal spirit in the district is rare, and it is a very delightful experience for a Unitarian minister to have to put on record. Mr. Bibby (pastor *loci*) returned thanks at both services for the many gracious acts of a memorable day. The work, which gives universal satisfaction, was wholly carried out by members of families belonging to Ballee Non-Subscribing Church. The new manse, which is still waiting completion, was much admired within and without by the numerous visitors of the day.

Belfast : All Souls.—The congregation of All Souls' Church, Belfast, has lost its oldest member in the death of Mr. John Greenfield. The funeral took place on Tuesday, July 2, the service being conducted by the Rev. G. L. Phelps and the Rev. A. O. Ashworth. At the morning service on the following Sunday, the Rev. F. Woolley, who officiated, read the following tribute to Mr. Greenfield's memory, by the Rev. W. H. Drummond, of London, formerly for many years minister of All Souls' Church :—"All of us who have known the life of this Church at all intimately and are attached to its history and associations, will feel that the death of Mr. John Greenfield is like the closing of a chapter in its records. He was our oldest member, and his venerable presence seemed to link us of a newer day with the days of long ago. He was deeply attached to this Congregation ; it was, indeed,

one of the central interests of his life. His memory lingered fondly over the long space of its history that he could remember. He liked to remind me that I was the third generation of my family whom he had heard from the pulpit of the Second Congregation. I suppose that almost his last public act was on Sunday, October 4, 1908, when he unveiled the beautiful Bi-centenary Memorial, and it is pleasant to remember now how deeply he appreciated the honour which we were all so glad to render as a tribute to his years, and certainly not less as a mark of our own personal affection and regard. Those of us who knew him in the more private relationships of life learned to respect him very deeply for the simplicity of his character and his old-world piety. I never heard a harsh or unkind word from his lips. As we leave him with hearts full of gratitude and trust in the hands of the Divine Mercy, let us remember him as one who seemed to our dim earthly sight to be among the faithful servants, 'true to the kindred points of heaven and home.'"

The Rev. Ernest Harold Pickering, B.A., of Gee Cross, has received and accepted a unanimous "call" to become minister of All Souls' Church. It is expected that the installation will take place on 1st October next.

Belfast : York Street.—On Saturday, 22nd June, the Annual Sunday School Pic-nic was held, Helen's Bay being the place decided on. The party, leaving the County Down Railway Terminus by the 2-30 train, arrived at their destination twenty minutes later. After some amusements on the beach, the entire party, numbering 46 in all, adjourned about 4 o'clock to Thompson's Hotel, where a splendid tea was in waiting. The hour, though somewhat earlier than usual, was nevertheless very welcome, and everyone seemed ready to do full justice to the good things provided. After tea, the party again returned to the shore and indulged in various games until the rain, which had threatened for some considerable time, became very heavy. As it showed no signs of soon abating, it was deemed advisable to retire to the railway station and return by the 6-30 train, though the hour fixed for the homeward journey was 8 o'clock. Thus was brought to rather an abrupt termination an otherwise very enjoyable outing.

Glenarm.—In recognition of the assistance she has rendered to the musical portion of the service, Miss Miskimmin has been made the recipient of a handsome marble time-piece, on the occasion of her marriage, by the members of the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Glenarm.

Greyabbey.—Special Floral Services were held here on Sunday, 28th July, at 12 o'clock noon and 4 o'clock p.m. Notwithstanding a torrential downpour of rain the services were well attended, about fifty-six being present at noon and one hundred and fifty in the afternoon. No doubt the shocking state of the weather had much to do with reducing the numbers attained on previous occasions. The church was beautifully decorated with plants, many of them lent by neighbours, members of other denominations. The singing was hearty, as it always is in Greyabbey, and the anthem, "Consider the lilies," was rendered with fine taste and feeling. The preacher at both services was Rev. A. Turner, of Templepatrick.

Larne,—On Tuesday, 9th July, the scholars, teachers, and other friends of this Sunday School enjoyed their Annual Excursion, the young people having been allowed to choose Templepatrick as the place of resort. After their rather hard experience on a former occasion of cold and rain going to and at the place named, their choice evinced no small courage. Possibly the same experience accounted for the timidity of Kilwaughter, which only supplied a meagre contingent of about a dozen. Surely the Hibernian scare did not daunt Kilwaughter. A happy party assembled at Larne Station at 9-45 a.m. on the day mentioned, and proceeded by train *via* Greenisland, reaching the Templetown Arms Hotel at 12-30. The country passed through, looking its very best, was a not unpleasant variation of the route taken

so often to Garron Tower. Mr. and Mrs. Elwood and their assistants soon served a comfortable meal on tables set forth on the lawn—a meal much required and equally appreciated by young and old after their merry run from Larne. The wants of the inner man satisfied, an adjournment was made to a large field kindly granted for the day by Mrs. Wiley. Here the usual sports and games were freely indulged in under the guidance and supervision of Rev. Thomas Munn. Rev. Alfred Turner, who, after regaling his own young folk in the manse grounds brought them to join their friends from Larne in the field—Mr. Frank Wright, Mr. Thomas Pullin, Miss Moore, Miss M'Kee, Miss M'Ninch, Miss Gledhill, and others. A photo of the combined parties having been taken by Mr. Pullin, the Templepatrick School returned to the manse lawn, where a separate photo was taken, while the Larne School betook themselves again to the hotel, where the ever-welcome lemonade and "fixings" were dispensed abundantly, after which a move was made for the station. Leaving at 6-30 on the return journey Larne was reached in peace and perfect safety at 8-45 p.m., good weather, good feeling, and the desire to please and be pleased contributing in no small degree to lighten the responsibility of Messrs. Wright and Pullin, who had sole charge and responsibility for the arrangements, and who it is but fair and no more than fair to say spared no exertion to render the day's outing so successful and so happy for all who were fortunate enough to be one of the party.

Newtownards.—The Fifteenth Annual Floral Service was held here on Sunday, June 30th. During the week previous to the service we had great anxiety regarding the possibility that the supply of flowers might prove very small. It had rained almost continually every night. In spite of bad weather we received a record supply of flowers from friends of other Churches as well as from our own members, so that the Church was decorated in a way that compared favourably with previous years. On Sunday, shortly before service, a heavy downpour of rain set in, ceasing however before service had begun, which eventually damped off the attendance. In spite of this, however, over a hundred were present. The service was conducted by the Rev. G. Leonard Phelps, of Holywood, who gave an address worthy of the occasion that was much appreciated. Special hymns were sung—some to old familiar tunes. One, "When Spring Unlocks the Flowers," was to the tune "Deva," composed specially for it, by one whom we must now sorrowfully call "the late" Mr. John Harrison. A metrical anthem, "A Sacred Spring," took the place of the solo of previous services; its beautiful melody and rich choruses being greatly enjoyed by all present. The solos were taken by Miss Ferguson and Mr. H. Mawhinney, and the choruses by the Choir. Miss Ferguson, the organist, presided.

Templepatrick.—The Annual Sunday and Day Schools' Féte was held on Tuesday, 9th July, on Mrs. Wiley's land, near the village of Templepatrick. There was a goodly muster of scholars at the school, and these, led by their teachers, Mr. John Carruth and Miss Birkmyre, marched to the field, where they arrived about 2 o'clock. On arrival, the field was found to be in possession of a strong contingent from Larne, led by the Rev. T. Munn, of Greyabbey, who was ably assisted by Messrs. Pullin and Wright, teachers in Rev. J. Kennedy's schools. It was a happy and, for the Roughfort School children, a very profitable meeting. For the Larne people were well equipped in all matters requisite to a successful Sunday School feté. They brought prizes in abundance, nor did they forget poles to mark out the course, sacks for racing, and balls of various kinds. Messrs. Pullin and Wright handled their task in a masterly way, and it was quite clear from the way they went about their work that they were on business, and their business was if possible to make every child enjoy himself and herself. The teachers of the Roughfort School also threw themselves

heartily into the work, with the result that a most pleasant afternoon was spent. It was regretted that Mr. Kennedy was not sufficiently strong enough in health to accompany his party. As regards the tea arrangements, a local caterer supplied our Larne friends, whilst the scholars and teachers and many friends of the Templepatrick party marched to the Manse, where Mrs. Turner, ably assisted by many willing helpers, dispensed tea to a large and happy gathering of children and some of their parents. After tea both parties met again at the field and renewed their games until 6-30 o'clock, when the Larne friends entrained for home. The others remained till about 9-30 o'clock. During the day a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mrs. Wiley for her kindness in allowing the use of the field.

MARRIAGES.

HICKS—KELLY.—On June 26th, 1912, at Rademon Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, by the father of the bride, assisted by the Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A, Henry Charles, youngest son of the late Henry Hicks, of Erindale, Belfast, to Mabel Hester Malet, only daughter of the Rev. J. A, Kelly, Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Dunmurry, Belfast, and grand-daughter of the late Rev. J. A. Malet. D.D., Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin.

LEITH—MISKIMMIN.—On July 17th, 1912, at the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, by the Rev. Alexander Osborne Ashworth, senior minister of York St. Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Belfast, Robert Leith, third son of Robert Leith, of Belfast (formerly of Coleraine), to Lizzie Jane, only daughter of the late Rev. John Miskimmin, of Greyabbey, County Down.

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